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15 July 1980

Near East/North Africa Report

(FOUO 25/80)



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NEAR EAST/NORTH AFRICA REPORT

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INTER-ARAB AFFAIRS

BADEA PRESIDENT: REACTIVATE CAIRO CHARTER

Paris JEUNE AFRIQUE in French 4 Jun 80 p 49

[Interview with Chedly Ayari, president of the BADEA (Arab Bank for African Economic Development), by Samir Gharbi on 19 May, place not given]

[Text] Arab-African cooperation must be reactivated. That is the opinion of the president of the BADEA, Tunisian Chedly Ayari. We met with him on 19 May, 1 month after his unanimous reelection to a second 5-year term.

If the Arab ministers of finance (governors of the Bank) in this manner renewed their confidence in him, such action relates in particular to the closeness of his management. The reserves, which were zero at the time the Bank was started in 1975, totaled \$86.5 million (18 billion CFA [African Financial Community] francs) at the end of 1979. For Ayari, the primary reason for this financial health is "respect for their commitments by all the member states."

Specialized in Arab multilateral aid to non-Arab African countries, the BADEA had granted \$332 million (70 billion CFA francs) in gifts and loans as of 31 December 1979.

However, Arab-African cooperation seems to be getting its second wind. With little diversification, it is almost limited to financial aid (\$4 billion or 850 billion CFA francs from 1973 to 1978) on the one hand and to political support in the conflict with Israel on the other hand. Also, a few months from the second Arab-African summit (scheduled for the end of the year), a certain amount of disenchantment is noted.

JEUNE AFRIQUE: BADEA credits experienced a marked decline in 1979: \$49 million compared to an annual average of \$71 million between 1975 and 1978...

Chedly Ayari: That was not a trend oriented decline but rather a cyclical decrease or, if you prefer, a situational decline. This was due principally to two factors. On the one hand, the maturation of projects is particularly slow in Africa. Since the BADEA finances only part of the total project cost, other lenders must be sought; and above all the financial participation

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of the state itself must be obtained. Occasionally, that takes a long time. On the other hand, there is political instability. In 1979, for example, two projects, one in Uganda (livestock raising) and the other in Chad (refinery) could not be implemented because of political problems. The BADEA was to have participated in these projects in the amount of about \$20 million.

JEUNE AFRIQUE: But it is also said that you practice parsimonious management.

Chedly Ayari: Effectively, my management is very cautious. I do not think it healthy to accumulate projects without assuring the institution's continuity in time. It will not be until after 1984 that the BADEA will ask its stockholders for an increase in its resources. From now until then, the Bank will not be lacking in the means for intervention. Therefore, it will not reduce its loans which should total \$75-80 million in 1980.

JEUNE AFRIQUE: As the director of an Arab bank exclusively responsible for Africa, what is your evaluation of Arab-African cooperation 3 years after the Cairo summit?

Chedly Ayari: In my opinion, we should reactivate the Cairo Charter, find new forms of cooperation, particularly at the level of commercial exchanges and private investments, and make cooperation more effective. For cooperation should not be limited to transfers of financial resources which one day will dry up.

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INTER-ARAB AFFAIRS

BRIEFS

ARABS AID ITALIAN, BASQUE MILITANTS--Algeria, Libya, South Yemen and certain Palestinian factions are reportedly working with the Red Brigades of Italy and ETA Basque militants. This is the conclusion of West European intelligence who have decided to cooperate in fighting terrorism in Europe. According to their reports, Algeria is reportedly training Basque commandos at a police school and the Yemeni Army is providing similar training. [Text] [Paris JEUNE AFRIQUE in French 25 Jun 80 p 46]

GAFSA ATTACK PLANNING--Boumedienne, not Qadhdhafi, ordered 2 years ago the 27 January 1980 attack at Gafsa. His aim was to start the Tunisian revolution. At least this is what Qadhdhafi confided to one of his friends, adding that he had merely placed a training camp at the disposition of the Algerian services and commandos. [Text] [Paris JEUNE AFRIQUE in French 25 Jun 80 p 46]

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ALGERIA

BEN BELLA STATEMENT RESPONDS TO NEWSPAPER QUERY

Comments on Statement

Paris JEUNE AFRIQUE in French 11 Jun 80 p 17

[Article by Hamid Barrada]

[Text] A year ago, Ahmed Ben Bella, the first president of independent Algeria, moved from total imprisonment to surveilled freedom. However, we do not know a great deal about what he is thinking. That is because although his guardian angels permitted his many friends to meet with him in his Msila villa, 300 km from the capital (at least early on, before the continual wave of visitors made them uneasy), they had always maintained an almost impenetrable wall against journalists.

A colleague from a peripheral French radio, Europe No 1, did manage to contact him. By telephone. However, the only thing we derived from their brief conversation was that he was in good health and that his voice had not changed. JEUNE AFRIQUE had resigned itself to gathering testimonies from friends who had talked with him (see JEUNE AFRIQUE No 978). An Arab newsman, unable to obtain an interview with Ben Bella, made one up! More scrupulous, an Iranian newspaper, ETTELA'AT, published a real interview a couple of months ago. However, only a few bits of it were disseminated outside Khomeyni's country.

To a question asked subsequently by the Tehran newspaper, in all likelihood in writing and trivial ("How can imperialism and Zionism be eradicated?"), Ben Bella could hardly resist the urge "to give free reign to his thoughts." He wrote over 20 pages in a small and fine hand. For the first time, he gave us a sample of his political thoughts.

We realize that during his long captivity (14 years) he did a lot of thinking, read a great deal (the wicked languages, according to Roger Garaudy in particular) and resurfaced the ideas which seemed to him untouchable a long time ago. The chief of state, who received the Lenin Prize in Moscow in 1964, does not hesitate to write today that the USSR and the socialist camp are an integral part...of the Western world. For the former secretary-general

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of the FLN, the single party is a single evil. It is above all clear that Khomeyni has made a deep impression on him and that he has no doubt about the Islamic revolution's having been called upon to "enrich the world."

On page 30, we have published Ben Bella's text; and, although we had to abridge it, we were careful to retain both its logic and freshness. In this profession of faith, certain proposals will not fail to seem naive and utopian, if not confused. However, in our opinion, therein lies the essence of the text. The essence resides in this profusion of ideas, this thirst for change, this outpouring of sincerity, traits which assure continuity between the Ben Bella of yesterday and the Ben Bella of today and which always evoke sympathy.

Text of Statement

Paris JEUNE AFRIQUE in French 11 Jun 80 pp 30-34

[Text] To a succinct question (see p 17) dealing with enormous problems, an equally succinct reply is permissible: we must first eradicate the roots of imperialism and Zionism from ourselves, for nowhere else have they found a better refuge. Zionism and imperialism have installed themselves within us, before they were in Palestine or in the United States. It is on the dung heap of our hearts that these two poisonous weeds are growing in profusion. Let us do away with this dung heap, and they will perish.

Let us return to God without associating anything else with Him; let us make of his teachings the fundamental rule of our life, to bring about his Kingdom first here on earth. In short, let us prepare a real plan for a civilization qualitatively superior to that offered by the capitalist Western world and bring within its domain the so-called socialist Western world. Who does not in fact now see that the capitalist and socialist worlds in the final analysis are only two nonantagonistic expressions of one and the same civilization emptying out onto the consumer society? Who does not agree, consideration given to the proliferation of multinational companies operating in the socialist world, that the latter are in the process of bringing about on earth, between the two systems, an integration as perfect as the union brought about in the skies by Apollo and Soyuz II?

We would have to invent a science and a new technology in the service of objectives different from those set by the Western military-industrial complex. One of the levers favoring such an orientation is constituted by Moslem funds deposited in Western banks which serve all the more to rivet to our ankles the chains of our dependence. By so doing, we would be giving to the wealth buried in the soil of Islam a utilization more in line with the message of our Prophet, God bless him.

A Different World Order

Strangely--but is it so strange?--natural gas and oil are principally Moslem natural gas and oil, if we add to the Arab countries Iran, Nigeria, Indonesia and even the USSR and China, since these resources are to be found in Moslem regions which at present are causing a problem.

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It was on the Arabian peninsula that the prophets of the people of the Good Book saw the light of day. An enormous supply of spiritual energy was discharged there to enrich the world. Centuries later, energy came forth--material energy this time--which has become indispensable to the functioning of an enormous machine, basically in the service of the West, for its well-being and prosperity, conceived by a rational philosophy which is fundamentally unknown to us and which has led to a formidable waste of the physical and human potentialities of the planet.

It is the end of this waste that we should hasten. The new form of energy should not belie the primary spiritual energy by serving another god: the god of the dollar. We will only succeed in this effort if we take our distance from the capitalist world order. Only if we create a different world order, even if in the initial stages it is merely embryonic. That was the most important question on the agenda of the Afro-Asian conference which was held in June 1965 in Algiers and which the 19 June coup d'etat rendered without object. The Bandung conference had taken note of the decolonization phase; the Algiers conference studied the methodology for passage to real decolonization through the establishment of a new world order. This idea must not die, nor should the seed rot underground. However, in view of the important political events which have since taken place, particularly the new course in China and the events which are shaking Southeast Asia, this idea can be taken up again within the Moslem framework.

Crowning Infamy

The gigantic efforts and sacrifices made by our peoples have enabled us to only obtain a flag and national anthem for each country. But the real content of that which we inherited is adulterated merchandise. Up to now, and in order to dominate us, the West has needed armies and cannons. Today, it is enough for the West to have a technology diploma, which it keeps to itself. A considerable tapping of our physical and human potentialities follows therefrom. Our able-bodied men emigrate to Europe by legions in search of their daily bread; about 70 percent of our degraded population follows the same path, as does our oil and gas. Members of the new middle class are profiting from this bastard system and their funds are also emigrating to the West. In this harmful system, technology plays an essential role.

As a vehicle of exploitation, technology is not neutral; in the final analysis, it determines a view of the world and life, a way of being and thinking. However, it is that which we are eager to teach our children: we make them potential emigrants for whom, when they reach adulthood, the paradise on earth can be found nowhere else but Paris, London or New York.

There is no future for us if we do not first call this technology into question, since science gave birth to it. Every civilization endows itself with science and technology suited to the meeting of its objectives. The science and technology which we must create in all sectors would be designed

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to serve man in his totality, contrary to Western science and technology, which have become an end in themselves, atomizing this man.

We must stop the brain drain to the West and arrange for the return of those who are already there. This will not just be theoretical, if we promote scientific research in order to move more quickly than the Westerners (petrodollars would be more than sufficient for that purpose) and above all if there is a political climate favorable to creativity. One has only to listen to Professor El Baz, the geologist working for NASA, who revealed that before emigrating to the U.S., he had in vain proposed various projects to the Arab League and Egypt, his country. Rather than help the Americans get to the moon before the Russians, he said in substance, it would have been better for his science to help discover more water in Egypt. That is the first contradiction: namely the order of the capitalist world, which gives us no future other than a life of mediocrity.

The second contradiction which should be brought up is that of the Moslem political regimes. Imperialism needs in-country accomplices to have its violence shouldered by our peoples. The theft and gigantic loss of our physical and human potentialities, the sterilization of our energies, this role of servants which sticks to our skins, it is first and foremost the Moslem leaders and their broad clientele who swallow it. Bribes, speculation, the purchase of hotels, restaurants, business funds, holdings on the Riviera or on the eastern coast of the United States (where one Algerian nouveau riche owns two airline companies), cash [de nu] purchases of houses in Germany, chateaux, regular charter flights organized from the Emirates to the night-clubs on the Riviera; these are a few examples of a daily scandal which is reported complacently by the Western press.

The infamy is crowned by funds of Arab origin--which in 1975 already totaled \$121 billion, according to estimates of the Chase Manhattan Bank, deposited in Western banks of which a not inconsiderable part--this should be underscored--is under the influence of the Zionist lobby. I should add to this the heavy shares purchased by certain Moslem countries in multinational companies, such as Fiat, Mercedes, Lockheed and Lonrho.

How is it possible to doubt the complicity of our leaders with capitalism when we know that no Moslem chief of state or government--with a single exception, but whose visit is causing a problem--has yet traveled to Tehran? At a time when an immense sun is rising in Iran and when all the Moslem world is as if illuminated by it, at a time when an immense hope is being born in the hearts of the overwhelming majority of Moslems, the leaders maintain a silence of complicity, when they fail to express open hostility vis-a-vis the greatest event which has occurred in the Islamic world for centuries.

There is only one reason for their attitude: fear. The liquidation of the contradictions of which I have spoken should be accompanied by a deepening of ideology as well as by an exegesis effort to update certain socioeconomic

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information about Islam. More generally, we must give proper responses to the fundamental problems of our times. Up to now, apologetics has constituted an essential arm. That is a childish attitude. The hour of maturity, of creation, has sounded.

Single Party, Single Evil

A kind of development favoring agriculture; light industrialization, the creator of jobs, to develop an integrated, self-centered economy designed to create an internal market and satisfy essential national needs, these are some of the lines of force of an action aimed at decreasing the harmful effects of technological dependence; dependence also as regards wheat which has become the strategic weapon par excellence of the United States. In the meantime, it would be proper to bring into a healthy condition, to slowly digest the major industrial developments by means of their partial or total stoppage.

We must also change direction in the sector of education and culture. And to do this, we must take our distance with reduction ideologies, in the first place with rationalism and its perversions.

The problem of the exploitation of man by man is central. Moreover, it is for lack of having resolved this problem that the Western system has failed. However, our misfortunes also began quite early when--near the end of the Othman caliphate, excepting the Ali caliphate--exploitation appeared in our own system. We must yield to the evidence: men who call themselves Moslems can perfectly well exploit other Moslems. How are we to expurgate this poisonous fruit from our system?

Islam can give the answer to this question and first and foremost in Iran.

Generalized self-management which leads to a kind of self-government, making of the commune, village or district the center of essential decisions in the life of citizens is in a position to suppress exploitation by means of the transparency which it creates in the relations between leaders and led. For a pedagogy of the revolution, perhaps we could adopt terminology familiar to Moslems and speak of "choura" (consultation which governed the conduct of the early caliphs). However, "choura," called upon to confer economic power upon producers particularly, would remain without effect, without political power.

The damaging effects of this demiurge; i.e., the single party, should be denounced. In a place where it existed--it being this glorious party: the FLN in Algeria--the most promising experiments came to a sudden end. A fatality seems to attach itself to all these parties under the cover of which there was an increase in speculation, abuses of authority, denial of individual rights; this led to talk, in places where the single party holds sway, of the single evil.

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Exploitation began with the disappearance of the "choura" and with Moawiya. We must return to the period of Ali to engage in deep reflection on instruments of power suitable for the assuring of a real exercise of "choura" and expurgate all forms of exploitation in our society. Of course, our problems are different from those of the Medina society 14 centuries ago, and the occasion calls for innovation. However, the goal remains the same: to abolish the exploitation of man by man.

Proscribe Secession

The Moslem world is confronted by other problems the solution to which will condition its future: problems of non-Islamic minorities in the land of Islam; problems of Islamic minorities living in non-Islamic lands; problems of the struggle against hunger; problems of racism and imperialism; problems of ecology; etc.

How would the Islamic world be in a position to irrigate, inseminate and enrich the world, if this selfsame enrichment was not experienced as such by minorities living in Islam land, such as the Jews or Christians?

Racism, this poison which corrupts everything, is the thing that is most widespread. It is true that in the history of racism Islam's dossier, and this is to its honor, is one of those with the least materials in it. Tolerance, this beautiful flower, grows in Islam land and at times has too heady fragrance. To maintain, however, that no form of racism has never seen the light of day in Islam land is a racist conception of history. We must take a look without complacency at these deep, cold and troubled waters within ourselves. Moreover, Moslem minorities have the sacred duty of defending respect for their values, with weapons in hand if need be. But the very moment that they are respected, secession should be proscribed.

U.S. Monopoly

Aid to developing countries, the struggle against hunger, action on behalf of ecology, of a qualitative relationship between man and nature, are a number of plans which could change the face of the world. Moslem money invested in the West would be fully ample for this purpose. The freezing of Iranian assets by the U.S. after the affair at the American embassy in Tehran expressly calls for better utilization of that money. To save our brothers in Allah who are dying of hunger every day in the Sahel, to halt the drying up of Lake Chad, to supply Africa with potable water, to put an end to terrible tropical diseases which are overwhelming 1 billion persons.

The sanguine West, which is too well nourished, prefers to concern itself with diseases which are proper to the consumer society of the northern hemisphere: cancer, poliomyelitis, cardiovascular diseases, etc. Malaria, bilharziasis, trypanosomiasis, leishmaniasis or leprosy are of but moderate interests to the budget allocated by the WHO for its campaign to eradicate these six diseases which totals only \$20 million, not even the price of a modern warplane.

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Only such action rather than this dialog of the deaf called north-south can change the face of the world. In this undertaking, we have a decisive weapon, on condition that we know how to use it: oil and gas. For the machine which is perpetuating the domination of capitalism is dependent upon them for its functioning.

Up to now, oil and gas have riveted the chains of domination even more closely to our ankles, so much so that a number of us think that these natural riches are a misfortune for our peoples. It is up to us to make of them an irreplaceable gift from the heavens. By restricting the production and sale of these products, by directing part of this production toward the southern hemisphere and another part toward Western countries which support these objectives.

A simultaneous action should be undertaken: the manufacture of proteins from hydrocarbons. For we know that the intelligence of an individual, indeed his aesthetic sense, depend upon a balanced diet; i.e., a diet rich in proteins, particularly in the early years of his life. Such considerations have led the U.S., a big producer of soybeans, which contain many vegetable proteins, to decide at one time to ban their export. Doubtless so that in 20 years the brains of those who live there will be the best organized and that the greatest number of Nobel prizes will be found there.

For the Glory of God

The Moslem world could without a doubt succeed in this historical undertaking. As proof thereof, take a look at what is happening in Iran and everywhere in Islam: those 60-70 percent of Syrian hajjs making the pilgrimage to Mecca who are under 25 years of age; those mosques in Algeria invaded by those under 20 who also sleep there and busy themselves from Thursday to Friday by holding classes there; those Filipinos who have been defending their faith with arms since Phillip II of Spain; that profound thirst of young Moslems to build the city of God on earth is also seen in the accession of Islam into the very heart of the modern Babylon that has the name of U.S.; it is the increasingly numerous conversions to Islam among the inhabitants of the northern hemisphere; it is an entire continent, Africa, according to the Christian missionaries themselves, which is in the process of becoming the continent par excellence of Islam; it is that force which grips us to the inmost depths of our being, in the face of injustice, and when the hour of sacrifice arrives, which makes us cry out for the glory of God: "Allah Akbar."

However, our approach would be without effect if it were to develop in isolation. On the contrary, it is by our joining together in a multiform action, in the open, building the revolution stone by stone, embracing not only Moslem man but man per se in a warm totality, which is proper to him, that this action has the greatest chance of succeeding. It is religion, philosophy or ideology which make man and woman better, which leave on living beings and nature a clear imprint of their powerful genius. It being

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understood that the days of a single system, a single ideology, a single religion are a thing of the past. The faithful of Islam will only be able to give it a new face by removing from it the pyramid erected over the centuries, since the white colonists, having discovered a continent, assassinated an entire race: the "red race," to which should be added the 100 million black Africans assassinated during slave trade of disgraceful memory when multitudes of men, women, old people and children were assassinated by colonialism, the victims of the Inquisition, world wars, fascism, Nazism, Gulags, insane asylums, racists bombs in Hiroshima and Nagasaki (unnecessary because the war had been won) and then the defoliants, these products which make men mad by destroying nature, which were poured onto Vietnam by the tons.

The Western countries have in turn occupied the summit of a pyramid. At the very top, the Yankee is enthroned today, standing solidly on the shoulders of other peoples of the central countries: the Japanese, Russian, German, French and English peoples, with these peoples in turn reposing on other shoulders. The approach of the lower levels is characterized by a fierce battle. The battle is to the one who climbs most quickly on the shoulders of his neighbor, it being understood that the bloodiest shoulders belong to those who find themselves closest to the ground; all of this with the encouragement of the one who is enthroned at the top of the pyramid and his immediate followers.

The position is all the more advantageous because blows and kicks have been generously distributed. Look at the Arab world: Algeria versus Morocco, Libya versus Tunisia, North Yemen versus South Yemen, Iraq versus Syria! However, the entire Third World offers a striking illustration of this. Its 41 countries constitute the base of this pyramid. They are so poor that they are incapable of honoring their public debt and, to survive, they are being kept "afloat" by international charity.

A Steep Road

This pyramid is the greatest infamy in the history of mankind. We must remove it at any price: so that an agent of the state of Brazil will no longer sell an Indian girl for the price of an oil stove; so that other Judges, as reported by Mohamed Ali, are no longer castrated in the U.S.; so that the sacrifice of Nelson Small Legs Leigna of Alberta will not have been in vain; so that others like Philomene from Angola, whose lower body was already paralyzed, will not be hanged by other racists hyenas as in Namibia; so that young women will not be stabbed in the back as they were at the Mogadiscio airport; for all the Tel el-Zaatars...

Because, in the final analysis--and we must never, never forget it--this pyramid has been erected on a tomb which they would like to quickly cover with earth, the tomb of our Amerindian friend, this present-day Lazarus whom we must help to resuscitate, for his burial would be that of our

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hopes in a world reconciled with him whose construction otherwise would remain as if blemished by a crippling vice.

As you see, my response is a long one. I ask the pardon of those who find a peremptory tone in it in places. I humbly recognize that I have ventured onto a steep road. I am above all a man of action. Not a theoretician. I thought that I would do something useful by allowing others and first of all my brothers in Islam to have the benefit of my experiences. That is my only excuse.

[Signed] Ahmed Ben Bella

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IRAN

KHOMAYNI POWER STRUCTURE ANALYZED

Milan PANORAMA in Italian 19 May 80 pp 98-103

[Article by Carlo Rossella with contributions by Alberto B. Mariani:
"And Allah Created Chaos"]

[Text] The regime's strong man in Iran is now Mohamed Beheshti. He is an ayatollah, 55 years old, heavyset, with an attractive beard.

During the reign of Shah Pahlavi, Beheshti was the "Friday ayatollah" at Hamburg. His ideas are elementary: Shiism, complete identification between church and state; total aversion for the west and for any kind of modernization; a welfare, agricultural-pastoral-commercial economy on a purely subsistence level, financed by oil revenues; complete Islamization of customs, of the schools and of society implemented through a permanent cultural revolution. Beheshti's party is the strongest in Iran. Administered directly by the ayatollahs and the mullahs--who along with the mosques, are rooted in every village and maintained by a social base composed of the poor (mostaz'efin) peasants, the petty bourgeoisie--the Islamic Republic Party is a kind of local Christian democracy. Welfare and petty patronage (the mullahs have the means; the state finances them and in that way they can support millions of unemployed and disinherited) are the party's two great points of strength. In the first round of elections it obtained two-thirds of the seats in Parliament.

Supported by the people, backed by what is actually a small army, the "pasdaran" (run by priests with machineguns, the guardians of the revolution control the country and Khomeini considers them a true "power of God"), Beheshti and his organization are a state within a state. When he speaks, his orders cannot be ignored. He wanted university instruction to be completely Islamized; he wanted the leftist students to leave the universities; and President Bani-Sadr allowed dissident youths to be fired upon, and the masses of the mostaz'efin attacked the educational institutions.

When he writes in his newspaper ISLAMIC REPUBLIC, he often does it to launch new political campaigns (he was the first to speak of the American Embassy

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as a "nest of spies"), to attack leftist youths (he simply considers them agents of the CIA), to criticize the efforts of President of the Republic Abolhassan Bani-Sadr, his principal enemy and adversary.

The ideas of the two main protagonists of Iranian political life are, in fact, diametrically opposed. After the revolution, Bani-Sadr would like to restore order to the country, to make the bureaucracy function, to begin economic planning (he told PANORAMA, "We could not survive for more than 9 months with the bloc"), to restore legal powers to the state transforming Iran into a modern and democratic nation inspired by Islam but also by socialism.

Beheshti, instead, absolutely does not want Bani-Sadr to consolidate his position. He thinks about a Persia of the beautiful times of antiquity, dominated by religious leaders, isolated from the rest of the world. Those close to President Bani-Sadr admit that the clash between Islamic traditionalists and reformist (even Bani-Sadr has a profound religious culture and, much more than Beheshti, is a theologian of Shiism) within the revolutionary council is very harsh. Above all, after the failure of the American blitz, Beheshti's positions were strengthened. The ayatollah, who is also president of the Supreme Court, had a committee named to investigate the presumed pro-American fifth column, invoked a new purge of the armed forces (the army, the navy and the air force, even though they are run down, are nevertheless Bani-Sadr's dependable military arm), asked and obtained the militarization of millions of persons "to stand guard against external attacks," proposed the revival of the tribunals and the so-called revolutionary committees.

The further disintegration of presidential power, the dispersion of centers of decision; the shattering of the revolutionary policy line in ideological diatribes, the rivalry among Moslem groups can lead Iran, as President Bani-Sadr informed PANORAMA, into an explosive situation. On 4 May, during an all-out power struggle, Bani-Sadr went so far as to write in an editorial in ISLAMIC REVOLUTION--the daily representing his group of modern religious persons and reformist intellectuals educated at Stanford and the Sorbonne--that "Khomeyni's great ability, which so far has permitted him to prevent a decisive clash between the priests and the intellectuals, was seriously damaged." In asking for "the unity of all Moslems," in imploring for "law and order" in Iran, Bani-Sadr practically asked his adversaries for a truce. Beheshti had no intention of granting it just a few days before the second round of elections. By controlling the assembly, Beheshti will in fact be able to restrict all the powers of the president of the republic. The formation of the new government and the appointment of the prime minister must be submitted to the judgment of the Islamic Republic Party (Bani-Sadr does not have an actual party, and instead enjoys a popular following guaranteed by the friendship and protection of Khomeyni).

The only play capable of preserving for Bani-Sadr at least a part of his power is the relationship with Khomeyni. The Imam sees Bani-Sadr every day, they spend hours together, they discuss everything point by point.

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Bani-Sadr's friends say, "For Khomeyni, Abolhassan is like a son. The Imam wanted him rather than a religious person to be the president of the republic and the people voted for him en masse. The Imam listens to him. In Paris they thought together about what Iran would be after the revolution."

But Khomeyni, the only true depository of power in Iran (he need say only one word to mobilize millions of persons and cause the disappearance of any protagonist from the political and religious scene), cannot always listen to Bani-Sadr. Everyone explains in Tehran, "He supports one or the other according to the moment, distributing rewards and punishment, seeking however to avoid decisively strengthening anyone in order to avoid arousing dangerous ambitions. Khomeyni wants to decide everything, always to have the last word." During this period, and within the revolutionary council they let it be clearly understood that his sympathies go to the more traditionalist ayatollas from Behesti to Rafsanjani, to Koeni, the spiritual assistant of the students who hold the American hostages prisoner.

In the Kurdish provinces, the guerrilla struggles of the independents have been transformed into real bloody battles, the independent fighters on 1 May refused the truce offered by Bani-Sadr. In the mostly Arab zone of Khuzistan the first fires of a guerrilla warfare which promises to be desperate were lighted and fed by the Iraqi secret services. The first shots of a guerrilla battle which promises to be desperate, and the attack on the Iranian Embassy in London, are examples.

In Azerbaijan millions of followers of shariat Madari, the moderate ayatolla so dear also to the bourgeoisie of the Teheran bazaars, harbor hatred for a regime dominated by the more extreme revolutionaries like Behesti. Within the army, tape cassettes are circulated with the recorded speeches of the shah, of Shapur Bakhtiar and generals of the old regime such as Oveyssi. The ex-Savak agents terrorize the people with their attacks.

If the danger of territorial disintegration provoked by independence wars seems distant, if the counterrevolutionary efforts of the supporters of the shah and of Bakhtiar certainly are not a danger (but what will the next American moves be?), much more alarming for the regime are the activities of the leftist groups who are disappointed by the revolution. "Our voice no longer reaches Khomeyni," declared the leader of the mujahiddin Mas'ud Rajavi told PANORAMA. He was forced by the Imam himself to withdraw from political competition for the presidency of the republic. Faithful to the ideas of Ayatollah Taleqani, a historical figure of the revolution, supporters of a solid program of social and revolutionary reforms (abolition of private property, workers' councils, people's army), the mujahiddin admit with scorn that "For the past year, nothing has changed for the poor people of Tehran." Rajavi and his followers (they number several tens of thousands, they are well armed, they are of proletarian and petty bourgeois origin, and they enjoy growing support) criticize a revolutionary process that is made up "only of slogans," they do not admit, even though they are Moslems, heavy interference by the mullahs in civilian life.

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Possible natural allies of Bani-Sadr in his fight against the clerical and integralist right, the mujahiddin are now the largest group opposing the regime (however they recognize the supreme authority of Khomeyni) after the president had to tolerate, due to Beheshti's pressure, their expulsion from the universities. In those days in mid-April armed clashed at Tehran and other cities of the country between pasdaran, young mujahiddin and the fedayin of the people (an organization that is practically illegal, with 40,000 armed militants of Marxist-Leninist leanings) were bloody. In the middle of this is the president who cannot give orders and who a few hours before the elections, through ex-Prime Minister Mehdi Bazargan, tried to reach an agreement with the mujahiddin to form a front of lay candidates to set up against the Islamic integralists. Over all the others is the Imam Khomeyni with his great charismatic abilities and his refined alchemies.

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IRAN

LIFE IN TEHRAN TRANSFORMED BY REVOLUTION

Changes in Everyday Life

Milan PANORAMA in Italian 26 May 80 pp 105-110

[Article by Carlo Rossella: "What a Life for Allah!"]

[Text] The radio transmits only official communiques, military marches and revolutionary songs such as "Allah o Akaar, Khomeyni Rahabar" (Allah is great, Khomeyni is our leader). The television is flooded with debates, round-table discussions, religious conversations, interminable stories broadcast live about parades, processions, marches, funerals. The English-language channel, at one time a delight for all the foreigners living in Tehran, was canceled. A story is circulating: "Why don't we have color television any more?" an Iranian wonders. "Because the ayatollahs and the mullahs dress in black and white" another replies.

In the capital's movie houses, truculent posters full of people with ugly faces and bearing weapons, announce only fighting films. The unfailing "Battleship Potemkin," a series of Italian neorealist masterpieces (from "Giuliano," by Francesco Rosi to "Sacco and Vanzetti," by Giuliano Montaldo), somber stories about commandos and paratroops (the Four of the Wild Goose), shotgun full-length features with heroes of Kung-fu and karate. The night clubs are closed. The theaters are quiet. Writers like Qolamhoseyn Sa'edi await the "thermidor." The discotheques (there is a Club 54 even in Tehran) have been transformed into barracks for the pasdaran (the guardians of the revolution, the militia of the regime) and for the komiteh (Islamic political control committees, an institution between the secret police and the neighborhood police).

On 20 March, the Islamic new year's day, at the Hyatt Hotel, one of the most luxurious in Tehran, the pasdaran and the komiteh, in the name of Allah, stopped a great festivity with the music of the Bee Gees and women in see-through dresses instead of the traditional chador. Rock cassettes, jazz records, Western classical music (from Beethoven to Mozart) are off limits even though the records and tapes are available on the black market. Alcohol is prohibited; beer (traditional for Iranian

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peasants) is considered a "drink of the devil." Whiskey, always Johnnie Walker Red Label imported secretly from Pakistan, is found on the black market and in rials, the local currency, costs the equivalent of 50,000 lire. Vodka, made in Tehran cellars with crude stills, costs 15,000 lire. Available on every corner, Winstons, the only American cigarettes sold clandestinely, cost 2,000 lire per package. Importation of automobiles is prohibited. In the Shemiran Quarter, the luxury section of Tehran, the boutiques and luxury shops are selling off the latest Dior creations and the latest Rolexes.

The high salaries have been decreased by half: Doctors, dentists, engineers, specialized technicians, Jewish shopkeepers, flee the country despite strict regulations on emigration (they are required to pass through strict police control; substantial bribes are paid to the mullahs). Almost 1 million well-do-do Iranians and monarchists have left the country. Other hundreds of thousands of taghouts, those who have a nostalgia for westernization and the old regime, wait to leave. An Iranian writer told PANORAMA, "Under Khomeyni life is joyless and without pleasure. Things were better when they were worse." The Islamic revolution also controls the most private aspects of life. Adultery is punished by the death sentence. Sexual relations between two unmarried consenting adults must be ratified (under pain of corporal punishment) by the mullahs through the "sigheh," the declaration of temporary concubinage.

Pasdarans and komitehs go into houses; they search closets and drawers; they check books and newspapers; they observe clothing and furniture. A suspicion, an anonymous telephone call, a personal dislike is enough to send one up before the Islamic tribunals. If the bourgeois are controlled because of their consumerist nostalgias, the youths of the left, the people's fedayins and the mujahiddin, undergo an X-ray investigation into their revolutionary activities in the neighborhoods and the universities. The Islamic reactionaries fear their speeches on the revolution that was betrayed, they fear their contacts with the proletarians, the mostaz'efin apprehensively observe their declared solidarity for the Kurdish rebels who were massacred en masse by the Tehran army.

Coordinated by Sadeq Tabatabai, Savama, the new political police, has taken the place of the old Savak, the bloody police of the Shah. A relative of Khomeyni, a nephew of Imam Moussa Sadr (the Shiite religious leader who disappeared during a trip from Tripoli to Rome), Tabatabai, ex-deputy prime minister in the Mehdi Bazargan government, has restored many ex-Savak agents back to their previous role. For the political police, controlled by the most extremist groups of the Islamic Revolutionary Party and not certainly by the moderates of President Abolhassan Bani-Sadr, there will be considerable work in the coming months. Once the great and enthusiastic revolutionary wave has passed, criticisms from the right or left, of the Islamic petty bourgeois regime are destined to increase and to change, once Khomeyni dies, into real armed rebellion (everyone in Tehran now has a gun).

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In the bazaars until a few months ago there was reliable support for the Islamic extremists, voter absenteeism increased, there was no attempt to hide the unpleasant effects of the trade embargo, the eventual nationalization of trade, the collapse of industrial production, the lack of any orderly economic and social legislation. A textile merchant told PANORAMA: "The Yazdbaf factory produced 45 bales of textiles per day up until the revolution. Now it puts only 10 bales on the market and at a price 50 percent higher because of very heavy inflation." A rug merchant said, "The drop in production is due to the absenteeism of workers who can draw their pay without going to the plant thanks to the protection of the mullahs and the disorder in the country. We hope that with the new government law and order will return." And that is what Bani-Sadr also wants ("more work and less consumption" he said in his 1 May speech). But few pay any attention to him in Iran.

A nation of poor and unemployed people, exploited for 30 years by a thieving economy desired by the shah and by the bourgeoisie who surrounded him, Iran is in the grip of a classic political-economic-social disorder which distinguishes the first phase of revolutions. The mujaidin of the people, advanced Islamics who dream of a country with a socialist economy, without private property, where exploitation and oppression are abolished, say, "Now we must pass to the second phase." According to the mujaidin, nothing has changed for the poor in the Iran of Khomeyni and the mullahs. Kept on a mere subsistence level by the Shiite religious leaders, through petroleum income, the disinherited of Tehran, who live in the quarters of the lower city such as Darvazeh-Ghar, wait for houses, food, clothing, work.

At Darvazeh-Ghar the income of a family of six persons on the average is 800 rials per day (about 10,000 lire), a kilo of rationed meat costs 130 rials, rice 160 rials per kilo, oil 240 per liter, bread 10, sugar 75 per kilo. But often food staples cannot be found: There is no milk, or eggs, meat is found only on the free market and costs 600 rials per kilogram. As it was under the shah, the poor eat bread and vegetables even though Ayatollah Beheshti advises that one give to those who have nothing, and distribute one's income.

Despite the inflation, only opium and books have dropped in price. Before the revolution a dose of opium cost 1,800 rials. Now it costs little more than 200 and consumption is increasing (prohibited by the shah because of his agreements with the Americans, the cultivation of poppy has resumed throughout the country). Forced for years to read books approved by the regime, the Iranians under Khomeyni devour hundreds of thousands of religious books and revolutionary works. Printed in Farsi in Moscow, the sacred Marxist and Leninist texts fill the shelves of bookstores and newsstands. They stand beside strictly Islamized magazines and newspapers that are all faithful to the word of the Imam.

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Friend of Bani-Sadr Interviewed

Milan PANORAMA in Italian 26 May 80 p 111

[Interview with Paul Vieille: "Martyrs, but Dissatisfied"]

[Text] Little more than a year after its triumph, where is the Iranian revolution going? PANORAMA asked Paul Vieille, author, with President of the Republic Bani-Sadr, of the essay: "Petroleum and Violence." Vieille, a personal friend of Bani-Sadr and Khomeyni, is one of the top world experts on the Iran situation.

Question: What is the blank sheet of Khomeynism?

Answer: There is a fairly extraordinary disorder under the heavens--

Question: But do you think it is a positive or a negative balance sheet...

Answer: It is very difficult for me to reason within such a strict question. But in any case, the present situation shows that the Iranian intelligentsia, whether lay or religious, has failed. And I will say more, it showed its absolute inability. It has betrayed the people. What has happened does not reflect the wishes of the people. Under these conditions I certainly would not cry if there were a dictatorship in Iran.

Question: In your articles in PEUPLES MEDITERRANEENS you wrote that you saw "the revolution take roads that were very different from those which had been planned." Would you explain the meaning of your criticism?

Answer: The central problem is that of the economy. Bani-Sadr and I had thought of a concrete revolution which would have taken Iran out of the one-product economy status of petroleum income. Instead the reverse happened. The religious leaders continue according to the same economic logic as the shah: Petroleum and nothing else.

Question: Economically, the Islamic Republic of Iran is in total crisis. The government and the bureaucracy are unable to restore order and to undertake a new economic policy. What do you propose?

Answer: Substantially the restructuring of the economy. There is the possibility of revitalizing the factories and plants even if Bani-Sadr is convinced that the economic blockade could stop everything. Political will is sufficient.

Question: The intellectuals are the great absentees from this revolution which brought to power the petty bourgeoisie and the priests. How did such a singular phenomenon happen since the intellectuals had been in the front lines against the shah?

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Answer: The opportunists put themselves at the service of religious power.

Question: But for the new regime was it not better to seek the consensus of the intellectuals rather than the petty bourgeois opportunists?

Answer: But compromises can be made much more quickly with opportunists. Let us not forget that Iranian society is profoundly Manichean.

Question: What are the chances that the revolution can survive?

Answer: It is difficult to predict. In any case it will always be victorious. For the Iranians, martyrdom is a satisfaction.

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IRAN

EXECUTION OF ONLY FEMINIST MINISTER DESCRIBED

Paris PARIS MATCH in French 23 May 80 pp 80-82

[Article: "How They Executed Mrs Parsa"]

[Text] Overconfidence led her to the firing squad. "If I am arrested, I want to believe in my country's justice. I will explain myself before the judges. I will prove my innocence," she once told her 73-year-old husband, General Chirin Shokhan, former officer of the commissariat for the Imperial Army.

She was arrested on 3 February at 3 am. A group of armed men of the Khomeyni Committee rang the garden gate bell at Mrs Farrokhru-Parsa's home located in Tehran's residential neighborhood. The 58-year-old Mrs Parsa was an elementary school principal before she became minister of education during the shah's regime. "You and your husband, follow us. You are under investigation," laconically announced the squad leader.

Mrs Farrokhru-Parsa did not even blink. She had long anticipated that this moment would ultimately come. They had already gathered the new toilet articles and clean clothes they would need during their detention. A few minutes later the old man and his wife climbed into a jeep, which drove away at full speed, siren howling, through the neighborhood of the wealthy "tarhoutti" to scare those still free with the knowledge that two of them had been arrested. After a brief stop at the headquarters of the Committee, the jeep was back on the highway, then onto a rocky road, up a hill and finally stopped at the heavy green gates of Evin prison. This was where, in the past, the shah's opponents had been interrogated and tortured. Here, since the revolution, the shah's supporters and collaborators have been imprisoned and investigated.

Mrs Farrokhru-Parsa was to spend the last 2 months of her life in a cell. The new masters of Iran daily subjected her to long interrogation. In course of time they gathered proof of her guilt. Yet her serenity amazed those who saw her. Mrs Farrokhru-Parsa was at peace with herself. She firmly believed she was innocent, and was therefore confident.

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The trial of "the dignitaries of the fallen regime" began on 22 April and was held in a brand new three-story building in the center of the prison. Mrs Farrokhru-Parsa's trial was held in a long, narrow room protected by an armored door. Its white walls were hung with dozens of photographs depicting victims of SAVAK, the shah's secret police. A hundred or so chairs were provided for the audience. In the back of the room was a table for the judges, with two chairs facing it for the defendants, Farrokhru-Parsa and Humayoun Ansari, former minister of housing.

How could one remain unafraid and resist despair or fear at the sight of this mounting crowd whose increasing noise grows into an uproar. And yet the former minister of education remained strangely calm despite the hostile shouts which greeted her when she came in dressed in gray and wearing the tchador. Some chanted: "Allah Akbar" (God is almighty).

She had said: "I believe in my country's justice." She and Ansari stoically withstood 10 minutes of gibes, invective, and threats. Finally, a side-entrance door opened and three men walked single file to the table and sat down. A mullah led the way, dressed in black and with the traditional white turban and dark beard. Next came a young man in tight jeans. Finally, the third person, the oldest of the trio followed, ill-shaven and severe-looking in his dark three-piece suit, without a tie--as appropriate for a revolutionary. They were the judges. The mullah sat on the right, the young man in the center, and the eldest on the left.

The audience rose then sat down again and stared at Farrokhru-Parsa. These simple, fanatical people were all expecting her, the only woman to have been minister for 6 years in the shah's government, to break down. But she did not. She remained impassive, always confident. The mullah put on his metal-rimmed glasses. In a monotone he began reading Koran verses about justice. He paused, put down his glasses. Then the young man spoke: "I represent the attorney general and I am one of the three who will decide the defendant's fate. At my side is the presiding judge whose function is to listen and advise. Beside him sits the mullah, the Islamic prosecutor. Both the mullah and myself are in contact with a representative of the Revolutionary Council to decide whether Mrs Parsa and Mr Ansari are guilty or innocent."

The young man stopped speaking. The mullah put on his glasses again and announced: "Today the bill of indictment will be brought against Farrokhru-Parsa, former minister of education, liable to the death sentence."

He solemnly scanned the room. The murmuring declined and stopped. Silence. Then the mullah opened his file and read: "You are accused of having fired from your ministry militants fighting for the freedom of Iran and for Islam. You are accused of having helped individuals involved in spreading corruption in your ministry. You are accused of having helped the fallen shah's regime which stole Iran's wealth and served the interests

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of the Western powers. You are accused of illicit relations with one of your colleagues, a man named Sartipi. You are accused of having dealt with Nematollah Nassiri, former chief of SAVAK, who has already been executed by the revolutionary regime for his crimes. You are accused of having bribed newsmen in order to get publicity and of having spread propaganda favorable to the imperial family but against the nation. You are accused of having headed a prostitution network in your own ministry in order to introduce nice girls to the imperial court, and more specifically to the shah's brother. Finally, you are accused of war against God."

The defendant remained seated while the bill of indictment was read. She made no gesture in defense and showed no sign of fear. She willed to stay confident. And then the attorney general declared in a threatening voice:

"We have all the proof to support each and every one of the charges brought against you. We have SAVAT reports showing that you have misappropriated enormous funds and used the money to buy carpets for your home. We will show all this during this trial. We will bring the proof of your corrupt life on earth and prove that you were leading a struggle against God." Only then did Farrokhrū-Parsa emerge from her impassiveness. But her emotion was so intense that she could only say in a low voice: "I am innocent and can prove it."

She was determined to be heard. In this country committed to hate, anarchism and delation, she would give her own defense. The former minister refused the help of a lawyer.

The hearing of the witnesses for the prosecution was scheduled for the second day of the trial. They were scattered through the audience, chattering, and raising their hands like schoolboys to be heard. One after another they assailed her with their charges, demanding vengeance.

But it was a woman in her fifties, face worn with grief, who undoubtedly deeply moved the judges and the audience with her testimony and dealt a setback to the defendant's prospects. Wearing the tchador, she walked slowly to the judges' table. She sat down close to a microphone and a tape recorder which recorded her grievances: "My husband divorced me a few years ago, abandoning me and three children to marry a young girl offered to him as a present by Parsa," she said fixing her eyes on the woman who had been one of the most prominent of the former regime. "My husband and this girl, Liba, left for the United States. My husband was an official in the Ministry of Education and worked closely with Parsa. She gave him Liba and destroyed our family." The crowd roared menacingly. She continued in a staccato voice: "She influenced my husband to denounce my son to SAVAK. He was an engineer and died of the tortures by that wild beast the political police."

After this confession the session was closed. Incidentally, the hammering by workers making repairs in a neighboring room had made it difficult to hear the witnesses' testimonies.

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Thursday was the third and last day of the trial. This was the day Farrokhru-Parsa would be able to defend herself; a day when--pathetically confident--she still wanted to believe in her country's justice. The judges called her to their table to tape her statements. In the past, in the heyday of the imperial court, she had always appeared made up and sparkling with jewelry. Now, without makeup and simply dressed, she sat down before these men with the terrible power to end her life. She knew it. She stared at them. Finally she spoke: "I am sorry," she signed, "but all the charges brought against me are unfounded. These charges have even brought into question my religious beliefs. I am a Shi'ite Moslem and hope to die in Islam."

Throughout her plea, struggling to escape death, she was interrupted by shouts. To no avail. Pale, voice ready, she continued her defense: "From 1968 to 1974 when I was minister of education, I did all in my power to spread Islam and the Koran. Thus, 15 days after my appointment, I ordered that Koran classes be organized in elementary schools. I had a deep respect for the Islamic religion. People like Ayatollah Beheshti, currently Iran's Supreme Court chief justice, and Mr Bahonar, member of the Revolutionary Council, could testify that I am telling the truth."

Farrokhru-Parsa went on to reject both the charge of prostitution and that of romantic involvement with her principal secretary. I swear by the Koran that there was never anything but a professional relationship between us. I am accused of having stolen public funds. You must be more specific about how I stole this money!" she challenged the court. She paused, and for the first time--discouraged--lowered her head. The presiding judgment told the restless audience that the verdict would be pronounced later.

When the two revolutionary guards entered Farrokhru-Parsa's cell she was sitting on her bed. It was 4 am, Thursday, 8 May. Several days before, she had learned from a newsman permitted to visit her that she had been sentenced to death. The two men in green denim did not need to tell her anything. She understood. She got up. She followed them through a maze of corridors of this prison that had witnessed so many executions and still echoed with the final footsteps of the condemned. In a small room, she was allowed to write her last will. Then, guards at her side, the procession continued, finally reaching a building where a child psychiatrist and a drug dealer were waiting to share her fate. Farrokhru-Parsa was blindfolded. She did not see the guns aim. She undoubtedly heard the first bursts of submachinegun fire, but when her body collapsed she did not hear one of her accusers shout: "Allah Akbar."

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IRAN

OIL INDUSTRY SUBORDINATED TO NATIONAL INTERESTS

Rome L'EUROPEO in Italian 27 May 80 pp 41-44

[Article by Lanfranco Vaccari: "What Good Is This Oil?"]

[Text] "Certainly we have money. All we have is foreign currency. It is like a man who is sitting on a fortune but does not have bread to eat. We must exchange that treasure for bread, otherwise we will die of hunger." So said Abolhassan Bani-Sadr, president of the republic. "We are under economic siege. There are no raw materials. There is no money." So said Mehdi Bazargan, ex-prime minister, member of the Revolutionary Council. "Our country, our revolutionary moslem country, can continue to live even if the Persian Gulf is set on fire and exports of petroleum are reduced to zero." So said Ali Akbar Mo'infar, petroleum minister.

Sixteen months after the shah was ousted, the revolution is making up its balance sheet. And it is in the red. But the Iranians do not know it. Bani-Sadr and Bazargan are happy exceptions in an exalted chorus that says, "Don't worry, Islam is victorious, its fate is magnificent and progressive." That is not how it is, inflation is moving along at 50 percent. The unemployed total 2.5 million. Industry, when it is not stopped by lack of raw materials and spare parts, runs at a fifth of its potential. The economy has become still more dependent on petroleum income. But above all, when they tried to use the weapon of crude oil to counter Western economic sanctions, petroleum misfired. It is no longer the definitive weapon: The United States, Europe and Japan survive very well without Iranian barrels of oil.

Western stockpiles are full. Winter was mild and there is a decrease in consumption in the summer. The campaign to save energy has had some result. The other nations producing crude oil gave no concrete support to Iran. Extraction of oil from the North Sea and Alaskan wells can be forced. For all these reasons, the Iranian petroleum weapon has been blunted. Furthermore, Tehran is finding it hard to sell its crude at \$35.00 per barrel.

Iran is politically isolated: The nonaligned nations let it be known that they "cannot intervene on its side so long as it holds diplomats hostage."

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It is also isolated in petroleum diplomacy: Kuwait has decreased its production by 25 percent but only when it would have been obliged to do it in any case because of seasonal needs. The attempt at alliance with Libya has failed and there was proof of this in the recent visit to Tehran by Tripoli Petroleum Minister Abdessalam Zagar. Saudi Arabia continues to pump 9.5 million barrels per day, the United Arab Emirates have announced they are ready to supply all the crude necessary to Japan and Western Germany.

The optimism Mo'infar forces himself to show is supported by few reasons. Concerning present Iranian exportation of petroleum there are no precise data: The official figure is about 1 million barrels per day, but sources within the Petroleum Ministry, who do not want to be named, say that "it varies from a maximum of 700,000 barrels to a minimum of 300,000 barrels." Sales which totaled 1.5 million barrels per day in January (sold above all to the free market, for between \$28 and \$35) collapsed in mid-February.

Under these conditions, Iran will not even succeed in reaching 10 of the 23 billion dollars forecast as income from petroleum, for the state budget for this year. And crude covers 75 percent of total income. At least until autumn, when in the best of cases the lack of Iranian barrels on the market will be felt, this country must live without petroleum. What will it do? "We are under conditions of a war economy," says Ezatollah Sahabi, minister of budget planning. "We consider ourselves in a state of war and we will act accordingly," Mo'infar says.

Iran goes to this "war" completely disarmed. There are no plans for production and investment. There is not even one industrial plan that is being realized. Bani-Sadr says: "The only positive result of our work is that we have increased the price of petroleum and decreased production. But the remainder is all negative." The president is the only one who tries to present the reality of the country for what it is: Disastrous. A high government official affirms that he resigned last month because "it is impossible to work under these conditions." He wants to remain anonymous. "All the others try to hide the sun with their hat. But sooner or later the people will see it: And furthermore, in this season, it burns."

For more than a month there has been talk about an "emergency plan for the war economy," but it is a mysterious objective. It is predicted that it will be launched on 21 May and no one can give any information at all about it a few days from the time it becomes effective. Deputy Finance Minister Mustafa Sarra hides his embarrassment behind a "no comment" and advised people to get information from the foreign ministry. It is expected to involve rationing, but Commerce Minister Reza Sadr still does not know what products are involved, nor whether they will be distributed through the mosques or in other ways.

Sahabi, which is responsible for it, is able only to describe its general characteristics: "The survival of the country, self-sufficiency despite any

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kind of blockade, the extension of Islamic justice and egalitarianism are among the most important points." This is a good demonstration of what Bani-Sadr calls "the verbalism of which we are all prisoners."

The only concrete measure known is the institution of a series of committees. Sahabi lists them and describes their tasks: "There is one for the economy and then for propaganda, culture, politics and the armed forces. Each one has subcommittees. They must seek ways to deal with the conditions of an economy of war and to achieve the great objective of the revolution: Self-sufficiency and freedom from dependency." The anonymous high official comments, "These people think the country can progress by the efforts of the bureaucracy, they talk, they talk, but they have not even one figure, one bit of data on which to work."

Certainly, there is always the resource of monetary reserves. They amount to \$15 billion. Economist Bahman Kiani maintains, "With that money, there shouldn't be any problems for the first year." But later? What will happen if sales of petroleum do not increase? Mo'infar claims to have "so many customers that they have to stand in line," but no one sees them. Iran could sell to oriental countries as it has already begun to do. But they do not have hard currency and their production of machinery is limited. Prof Hussein Baher, who teaches economics at the University of Tehran, maintains, "The socialist bloc could be a mediator: It could buy our petroleum to resell it to the west and in this way provide us with hard currency. But it would be a sensational political defeat."

In his crude and coarse style, Mo'infar has a ready solution: "If we are not able to give the budget \$23 billion, we will tell the people so and we will cut superfluous expenditures." Now the Iranian budget is divided into two parts: Current accounts and investments. Ninety percent of the former is absorbed by the bureaucratic apparatus, the equivalent of predicted petroleum income. The second involves appropriations for \$13 billion. In part, this is expected to come from taxes and part will represent a deficit. Bani-Sadr says, "This is a ridiculous figure if related to the needs of the country, but there is worse: Last year, with a lower figure we were not even able to spend half of it. And this half went into consumption and imports, not into production."

The regular budget is known only in general terms and it has not yet been discussed by the revolutionary council. There is a delay of a couple of months and, in the meantime, Iran goes along from day to day without even a monthly budget on the basis of one-twelfth of that of last year. And, in any case, the cuts cannot be made in the current budget because an elephantine bureaucracy has to be paid, which is triple that of industrialized nations, and which works an average of 1 hour and 11 minutes per day. But cuts also cannot be made in investments, which are the only way to absorb 2.5 million unemployed, 25 percent of the working population.

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It is a figure which Labor Minister Mohammad Nematzadeh rejects with horror: "Anyone circulating it is plotting against the revolution. In reality, we have less than 0.5 million unemployed." A single fact is enough to prove him wrong: From the day of the revolution, the Tehran population has increased by 2 million persons who came with the hope of finding free housing. Obviously no one has a job. Furthermore all the companies with American participation have been closed and the great majority of the 700,000 to 800,000 Iranians who worked in a foreign capital business were without a job when the English, French, Germans and Japanese left.

"We tell the world that we are proceeding at full speed and that we are defeating imperialism. But in the world of real things and not in that of lies and deception, we are moving backward." This is the thesis of Bani-Sadr. The newspaper of the Islamic integralists JOUHMURI ESLAMI admits that the "slogan of 'struggle against imperialism' does not go beyond empty words." Not only has dependency on petroleum income increased, but any development strategy is completely lacking. The clergy continues to speak of independence, on the radio, on TV, in newspapers, in speeches, but no one has ever been able to explain concretely how Iran can be independent from the east and from the west.

Far more than Western sanctions and insufficient sales of petroleum, four unresolved problems are blocking the country's development. The economy continues to hope it will be revived, domestic business is paralyzed and already the hoarding race has begun, all big work projects are stopped at midpoint without anyone taking the responsibility to move them forward, building is in a crisis and the problem of the lack of housing is chronic. Together, these problems make it impossible to accept Bani-Sadr's appeal for higher production. He repeats it in every speech, that is once a day, but in vain.

The collapse of production is certainly due to the lack of raw materials and spare parts. Now, in the Paykan automobile plant, every automobile costs 40 million lire. In 1 year the market price has doubled, from 4 million to 8 million [as published]. The manager of a building materials plant says, "Last year, a cement pipe 35 centimeters long could be sold for 350 lire. Now, we lose if we sell it at less than 9,000 lire." The cost of labor more than doubled in 16 months and the minimum wage has risen to 6,350 lire [as published] per day. Bani-Sadr says, "A consumer race has started. Everyone wants everything and right away. Production has decreased. This imbalance creates a dangerous situation."

Inflation is now around 50 percent. The president predicts that if we are not careful, it will reach 100 percent and will annihilate the country." Last year it was 12.5 percent. All the money given to industry was absorbed in recent months by wages, because even at zero production, the Islamic government, which has nationalized almost everything, cannot dismiss people. A climate of confusion has been established in the plants which makes even current low production problematical. This is due to those whom the Islamic

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Society of Workers of the Tavanir Electric Power Plant calls "the revolutionaries of the postrevolution." It is a situation Bani-Sadr has often criticized: "If the workers organize a council in order to put down the managers, that cannot be called a council, but a whip."

The Islamic Society of Petroleum Workers of Abadan, the largest refinery in the country, says that "many people, after the revolution, adopted the title of 'ideologist.' An enormous amount of money is spent for them and they have no ability." These ideologists pretend to direct industry. The workers say, "The result is that there is no maintenance and a part of the facilities are halted daily." And at Tavanir, the representatives of the Islamic Society warn, "It is easy to prophesy that within a very few months the plant is destined to close down due to the incompetence of the managers."

Bani-Sadr's conclusion is not pleasant: "Economically speaking, we are corpses."

And Then There Is the Brain Drain

Following the revolution, 25,000 technicians left Iran. Physicians, engineers, businessmen, "highly specialized people like air force pilots for whose training the country made enormous investments," says economist Cyrus Hibrhaim Zadehin. "In a disorderly flight all these joined the court manipulators and the regime's profiteers."

The absolute value represents an enormous figure and it is much more important for a backward nation where 75 percent of the nation is illiterate. The Abadan school of specialization for petroleum installations, one of the few in the country, was closed after the revolution when the "ideologists" began running the refinery.

At Bandar Abbas, the Italian G.E. Company built a 1,280 megawatt power plant, but the part that is ready cannot become operative because not a single Iranian is capable of running it. As usual, Petroleum Minister Mo'infar pulls out his magic formula: "We have the money, we can hire experts from all the world without worrying about their nationality." This means continuing on the road of dependency.

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IRAQ

ORGANIZATIONS SAID TO BE FORMING COALITION TO OVERTHROW REGIME

JN201251 London REUTER in English 1237 GMT 20 Jun 80

[Excerpts] Tehran, June 20, REUTER--Left-wing, nationalist, and Iraqi Kurdish groups will shortly form a military coalition with the aim of overthrowing the Ba'thist government in Baghdad, Kurdish spokesmen said here today.

Two members of the seven-man Political Bureau of Iraq's outlawed Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) who are in Iran for talks with the Tehran authorities said coalition talks were well advanced and could bear fruit within the next month.

Dr Fuad Masum and Dr Kamal Khoshnaw said the PUK general secretary, Jalal Talabani, held talks here last month with members of the Iranian Government and Revolutionary Council.

But Dr Masum added "We have asked for no aid and they have not offered it. There are deep problems in the relations between Iran and Iraq and we do not want to bet on the outcome."

Dr Masum said the PUK would join Iraqi communists, socialists, and nationalists in creating a democratic coalition which would guarantee political freedom "for all progressive forces" and autonomy for Iraqi Kurdistan.

Dr Khoshnaw said that 5,000 guerrillas were fighting the troops of Iraqi President Saddam Husayn in northern Iraq, although they controlled no towns or villages.

Dr Khoshnaw said that PUK guerrillas fought their last major engagement with government troops in May near Irbil, the administrative centre of Iraqi Kurdistan, killing 74 soldiers for the loss of two guerrillas.

Dr Masum said that the PUK forces were poorly armed. "Apart from captured weapons and purchases from smugglers, some friendly liberation movements help us," he added.

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MAURITANIA

NEW WAVE OF REPRESSION EXPECTED AFTER PRESIDENT'S TOUR

Paris JEUNE AFRIQUE in French 4 Jun 80 pp 42-43

[Article by Abdelaziz Dahmani: "Military Hullabaloo"]

[Text] On 12 May, the Mauritanian chief of state began his first major international tour, which took him to China (12-18 May), Iraq (19-20) and Kuwait (21-23). The fourth "boss" of the country since the 10 July 1978 coup d'etat, Lt Col Khouna Ould Haidalla went in search of political support and financial help which a difficult domestic situation demands.

Surprising Request

But not before first establishing in Nouakchott numerous competitive military forces which would thus cancel each other out. A crafty precaution in view of the fact that the chief of state thought it prudent to cancel a number of previous trips, sometimes at the last moment, including that to Lagos for the first economic summit meeting of the OAU (28-29 April) and that to Nice for the seventh Franco-African summit meeting (8-10 May).

Another military hullabaloo during the president's absence: the evacuation, lasting from 20 to 25 May, of the 200 French parachute troops established in Nouadhibou (in the North) after only 6 months, at the urging of the government of this same Khouna Ould Haidalla, to protect the territorial integrity of the country. This departure, which did not fail to provoke serious controversy among the members of the Military National Salvation Council (CMSN), was not even made known to the Mauritaniens. It was demanded on 24 April through Nouakchott, where it was explained that the French might have tried to promote a new coup d'etat. Naturally, Paris denied this hypothesis. And relations between Mauritania and France suffered therefrom.

The truth is that France refused to agree to an astonishing request from Mauritania made on 14 April, during a visit paid to the Elysee Palace by Minister of Foreign Affairs Moktar Ould Zamel: "Give us back the old president, Moktar Ould Dada." Mr Valery Giscard d'Estaing was both

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surprised and irritated to hear that the French government had made such a "commitment." "France is not an annex to the Mauritanian prisons." "It is not true," both the Elysee Palace and the French embassy in Mauritania responded.

Another Wasps' Nest

In fact, on 19 September 1979, Nouakchott had accepted on principle, and unconditionally, that the former chief of state would be freed, during the visit of Khouma Ould Haidalla, who was then prime minister. Fourteen days later, on the evening of 2 October, Moktar Ould Dada left the Nouakchott airport (JEUNE AFRIQUE, No 980), in fact released on the decision of the prime minister, with the complicity of Lt Col Ahmedou Ould Abdallah, at the time chief of the general staff. The CMSN was kept out of it by Haidalla, who feared repudiation. Summoned after 2 October to explain himself, he gave assurance that this was only a "conditional release."

But Haidalla had not foreseen that Moktar Ould Dada, having demanded nothing and stubbornly refusing, during his Paris retreat, to make any statement, hold any interview or meeting urged by the international press, would benefit from a resurgence of popularity. The respectful welcome given him by the Saudi authorities during his minor pilgrimage to Mecca (JEUNE AFRIQUE, No 1010) was the last straw.

Strong-armed repression then became the lot of a number of former ministers and cadres charged with complicity in a vast plot encouraged by France, Morocco and Saudi Arabia. However, the CMSN, with its multiple factions, was reluctant to go over to "the other side," with Algeria, Libya and the "Sahraoui Republic," urging Nouakchott to recognize it as speedily as possible.

A defense pact was then offered the distant Iraq. Without success. Long conferences with the Soviet ambassador followed the demand that the French troops be evacuated, but the moment was hardly propitious for Moscow to plunge into a new hornets' nest. It was then that the trip--in accordance with a request--to Peking occurred. During the traditional banquet, Chinese Premier Hua Guofeng injected a note of coolness by stating that "peace should never be obtained through supplication or compromise."

The Whirlwind

The trip to Iraq, where the Mauritians obtained a promise of economic aid, went better. But back in Nouakchott, Haidalla learned that a vast movement including civilians as well as military officers had organized inside and outside the country under the name Alliance for a Democratic Mauritania (AMD). Its goal is to "overthrow the perpetrators of the 10 July 1978 putsch" and to establish "a political regime based on pluralist democracy," "territorial integrity," and "a liberal economy." Thus a new wave of repression is expected.

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MAURITANIA

BRIEFS

SPECIAL ADVISER--Since 10 May Col Moustafa Ould Saleck has been acting as a special adviser to the Mauritanian head of state, Lt Col Khouna Ould Haidalla. Ould Saleck, who had been retired and sent off to his native village of Kiffa in June 1979--this after having become president following the coup of 10 July 1978 which toppled Mikhtar Ould Daddah--was in Baghdad on 19 May with Haidalla, to try to persuade the Iraqis to give Mauritania more assistance. [Text] [Paris JEUNE AFRIQUE in French 28 May 80 p 39] 9631

OFFICER TAKES TO BUSH --Mauritanian Lt Col Ahmed Salem Sidi has taken to the bush. A likely presidential candidate just a few months ago, this former vice president of the Military National Salvation Council crossed the Senegal River in secrecy and went to Dakar to join the Alliance for a Democratic Mauritania, which is urging the return of civilians to power. [Text] [Paris JEUNE AFRIQUE in French 4 Jun 80 p 40] 5157

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PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF YEMEN

BACKGROUND GIVEN FOR ISMA'IL'S OUSTER

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic 25 Apr-1 May 80 pp 20-21

[Article: "South Yemen: A Change of Driver and Fewer Red Lights"]

[Text] A surprising turn-around has occurred in South Yemen, leading to a change in the driver who has steered the vehicle for the last 12 years. Who is the new driver? Why did the change occur? What are its dimensions and the effect it will have on the struggle among the international powers in the remotest south-west corner of the Arabian Peninsula?

An air of agitated uncertainty prevails in Aden, after the calm, peaceful "palace coup" which surprised observers by removing 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il from his two important positions as secretary general of the Central Committee of the Yemeni Socialist Party and chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme People's Council of the PDRY, less than a week after his return from Tripoli where, as president of the republic and party secretary general, he participated in the Steadfastness Front conference.

Official reports from Aden spoke of his voluntary resignation from his posts, and remained silent as to whether he would remain general of the armed forces, which is an honorary position he acquired a few months ago in order to consolidate his individual control over the state, party and army apparatuses.

Because 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il put everyone in the shadow, his popularly circulated nickname became "'Abd-al-Fattah Stalin." He was acknowledged to be the strongest South Yemeni having connections with the Soviet Union, and Moscow's strong man in Aden. He was the one who imposed on South Yemeni state and party apparatuses total alignment with Moscow, with Ethiopia and against Somalia, in the Ogaden Battle. He was the one who directly and indirectly, secretly and openly, granted various facilities and military privileges to the Soviet Union at Yemeni air and naval bases.

Nevertheless, informed observers made a connection between his fate and a change in Soviet "sympathies" with regard to him.

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Those informed observers say that his competitor and successor, 'Ali Nasir Muhammad, found his golden opportunity to convince Moscow to put 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il on the shelf when the latter took it on himself to sign the Steadfastness Front summit resolutions on the 15th of this month without conferring with Aden or the Soviet Union.

These informed observers say that one of the incentives which hastened the end of 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il lies in Paragraph 16 of the Steadfastness summit statement, which commissioned Col Mu'ammarr al-Qadhdhafi with contacting the Soviet Union, in the name of the Front, to investigate the possibility of developing relations between the Soviet Union and the front, thereby leading to more political and military support and to a restoration of the regional military and political balance.

It is said that Moscow did not look with pleasure on 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il's participation in signing this paragraph, which might unjustifiably complicate the Soviet Union's relations with some Arab states, and make it a party to the struggles among Arab axes.

Was There An Attempt To Wreck the Airplane?

In any case, political fate seemed determined to put some kind of end to 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il.

When his airplane was about to land at Tripoli Airport, there was almost a catastrophe. Its two front wheels stuck for a long time, and the pilot carried out a lengthy forced circling maneuver to consume a greater part of the fuel before it was forced to land without front wheels.

Fate intervened dramatically, and the sliding door which had prevented the wheels from coming out of their compartment opened, and 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il's plane landed at the airport safely. The matter was considered an unexpected technical defect which turned out safely.

But the political demise of 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il by means of a surprise peaceful coup less than a week after his return from Tripoli caused many observers to believe that there had been a decision to get rid of him in some way, either by an incident of "divine decree" or through internal political decisions.

The question being raised by observers in this context is: will Aden remain committed to what 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il agreed to, since his political end was tantamount to a way out, for the Soviet Union, from what it considered a jeopardizing situation, causing the escalation of its as yet unresolved crisis with the United States in the region to move to a higher level, so as to not destroy the Soviet Union's remaining bridges to the United States, especially since the balance of power in the Middle East is practically speaking inclined in favor of the United States.

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In any case, 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il was not the first official of a Marxist regime to be consumed by his adversaries, seizing the opportunity of his absence.

Previously, Khrushchev seized the opportunity of Soviet Defense Minister Marshal Zhukov's absence on an official visit to Yugoslavia to remove him from his post, so that he returned from Belgrad with the title Comrade Citizen Zhukov instead of Marshal Zhukov--he who had thrown the weight of the Soviet Army in Khrushchev's favor against Malenkov.

Then too, Khrushchev's repeated absences from the Soviet capital on foreign trips and domestic vacations were the golden opportunity which the Brezhnev group seized to remove him from power.

Recently the matter was repeated in a similar but bloody manner in Afghanistan, for there was an agreement to remove Muhammad Nur Taraki while he was absent at the non-aligned conference in Havana, in favor of Hafizullah Amin, who in turn was eliminated in favor of the present ruler Karmal Babrak, the least popular and personally weakest of the Communist Afghan leaders.

The Shadow Man Leaps Into the Light

In this context came the Aden developments in favor of 'Ali Nasir Muhammad, who has a self-effacing personality and who is known for always standing in the shadows away from the light, a tactic which has enabled him to remain isolated from the bloody struggles between the wings of the National Front, which has now been transformed into the Socialist Party, and which enabled him to remain at the head of the executive apparatus (the cabinet) since 1971.

The fall of 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il came right after important developments which came about through a mutual understanding with the YAR (San'a') to revive unity negotiations and re-connect severed relations with Saudi Arabia.

On these two levels, 'Ali Nasir Muhammad played a principal role, said to be at the suggestion of the Soviet Union, in order to reassure Saudi Arabia and allay its fear of a Soviet outburst towards the Arabian Sea and the Gulf region through direct intervention in Iran, and then to convince San'a' that improving relations with Aden by reviving unity plans would help it in the game of playing off international forces against one another in the interest of strengthening the Yemeni entity.

It is certain that 'Ali Nasir Muhammad has exploited, to his own interest among party apparatuses and local and Soviet power centers, the negative complications which resulted from the repressive campaign led by 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il against a number of progressive forces which did not owe allegiance to him, which led to an obvious deterioration of relations between Aden and Baghdad, and to the emergence of a strong, foreign-led opposition front led by 'Abd-al-Qawi al-Makkawi, former Aden prime minister and head of FLOSY.

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While the prevailing belief is that 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il has come to his political end this time, precedents in his life history indicate that he is a "political cat" with seven lives.

This was not the first time he was politically overthrown; it had happened before during one stage of his struggle with Former President Qahtan al-Sha'bi, who arrested him in early 1968 and then released him under pressure from demonstrations by the ruling party's left wing.

During one unsettled period from April to May 1968, which resembled the present period, 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il carried out an abortive attempt to regain power. He managed to flee in a Soviet plane which took him to Bulgaria to be cured of a "stomach ulcer," exactly as happened later with Hafizullah Amin of Afghanistan.

'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il was not away in Bulgaria for very long, for he returned to Aden after a Soviet-arranged settlement between him and President al-Sha'bi which restored him to his party positions. Then Isma'il led the coup movement which removed Qahtan al-Sha'bi on 22 June 1968 and which led to the execution of Former Prime Minister Faysal 'Abd-al-Latif al-Sha'bi in prison.

Consequently Isma'il, in his capacity as member of the Presidium, secretary general of the ruling party, and chairman of the Supreme People's Council, entered into a ruling partnership with President Salim Rubay' 'Ali, chairman of the Presidium, i.e. head of state.

Through long years of tireless work, 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il aimed at strengthening his personal control over all the political apparatuses by means of a compulsory unity imposed on them in the name of the Unified National Front Political Organization.

Relying on this control, he shifted his struggles with Salim Rubay' 'Ali into the open in a play of real one-upmanship to gain the friendship of the Soviet Union. Salim Rubay' 'Ali lost the deciding round when he did not fervently align himself with the Soviet Union in its alliance with Ethiopia against Somalia, preferring to maintain some degree of balanced relations, along with trying to reach an understanding with Lt Col Ahmad al-Ghamshi in San'a', on the consideration that mutual understanding between Aden and San'a' would constitute a strong bargaining card to help maintain Aden's independence on the decision-making level in foreign relations.

But political fate ambushed Lt Col Ahmad al-Ghamshi, who was assassinated on 24 June 1978 under circumstances which stirred up many rumors about the parties which instigated, and benefitted from, his death.

Isma'il Eliminates His Opponents

But 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il was the greatest beneficiary in Aden of al-Ghamshi's assassination in San'a', for he surprised his ally Salim Rubay' 'Ali with a

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surprise bloody revolution in which some army divisions participated, which led to the removal and execution of Salim Rubay' 'Ali so that 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il could take over all legislative, executive and military powers, after having granted himself the title of general and extending his control over the armed forces.

There is a commonly-held opinion among most observers that the non-prediction of what might happen in Aden is the ideal way of predicting, operating on the principle "whoever says 'I don't know' has delivered an opinion."

But those who know the new successor, 'Ali Nasir Muhammad, say that he is a man of settlements, a man who grasps the rod in the middle, and that in order to complete the isolation and political demise of 'Abd-al-Fattah Isma'il he will try to conduct a national reconciliation, which is said to have been stipulated by San'a' as a guarantee enabling the resumption of unity and unification negotiations.

The important thing about the matter seems to be the emergence of clear-cut practical yardsticks for how far 'Ali Nasir Muhammad will go along with Soviet policy in the region.

Therefore, the outstanding question is: Is what happened a Soviet coup for the benefit of a new Soviet policy, or is a coup to correct a twisted situation, or is it a combination of the two?

As Shakespeare said in one of his ghost plays, "That is the question."

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TUNISIA

POLITICAL PRISONERS RELEASED, MASMOUDI GOES ON HUNGER STRIKE

Paris JEUNE AFRIQUE in French 11 Jun 80 pp 44-45

[Article by Abdelaziz Barouhi]

[Text] On the occasion of the national holiday on 1 June, 26 political prisoners were released. These included 8 activists of the Marxist-Leninist group, El Amel el-Tounsi (the Tunisian worker), who were arrested in 1975; 13 organizers of the clandestine newspaper, CHAAB, who had been in prison since 1979; 3 students of the "Bardo II" group; and 2 members of the PRPT (Tunisian People's Revolutionary Party) (JEUNE AFRIQUE No 1012).

Under Escort

Mohamed Masmoudi, former minister of foreign affairs, confined to surveilled house arrest since 1 June 1978, had already been allowed freedom of movement at the beginning of May. Masmoudi lost the ministry of foreign affairs as the result of the Tunisian-Libyan union agreement signed in Jerba on 12 January: President Bourguiba reproached him for having "dragged" him into that adventure. The former minister is now living in Paris from which point he takes frequent trips to the Middle East and Libya and where he publishes LES ARABES DANS LA TEMPETE. In September 1977, he went to Tripoli where he met with Qadhafi (his personal friend) and Habib Achour, then-secretary-general of the UGTT (Tunisian General Federation of Labor).

With their help and that of Abou Iyad, the number two man of the PLO (at the time in the good graces of the Libyan leader), he made ready to return to Tunis. On 12 December 1977, he deplaned at the Tunis-Carthage airport where Abou Iyad was waiting for him at the foot of the passenger ramp.

Implicated in the riots of 26 January 1978, he nevertheless remained at liberty, until 1 June, the day the police surrounded his La Manouba villa near Tunis. There he was under de facto surveilled house arrest and received only infrequent and screened visitors. No trial was to follow. Mohamed Masmoudi was authorized to go to the mosque every Friday and to telephone his family. From time to time, under escort, he visited his birthplace, Mahdia (nearly 200 km south of Tunis). Emir Fahd, crown prince and vice

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president of the Saudi Arabia Council of Ministers, intervened on his behalf, it is said, during a trip to Riyadh in May 1978 by Tunisian Prime Minister Hedi Nouira. To no avail. In 1979, the former chief of the diplomatic corps requested permission to make a pilgrimage to Mecca. Unofficial reply: "The time is not opportune." In February 1980, he took advantage of the Gafsa affair to send a telegram of support to President Bourguiba. Indirect reply: "Perhaps he wants me to reappoint him minister of foreign affairs so that he can repeat the same policy and the same mistakes."

However, the opening up breeze which accompanied the formation of Mohamed M'Zali's government on 23 April (JEUNE AFRIQUE No 1010) reached the "prisoner" of La Manouba. As they say in Tunis political quarters, "his surveilled house arrest was changed (beginning of May) into surveilled freedom." Everyone thought that in a second stage and in the thrust of the present political liberalization, he would be given total freedom and his passport.

Only Sympathy

Paradoxically, this was the moment chosen by Masmoudi to begin an unlimited hunger strike on 24 May, after having a letter delivered to Minister of Interior Driss Guiga, a letter in which he protested the restrictions on his freedom.

Mme Masmoudi, who had been living in Paris for several years, launched a parallel press campaign. She said that her husband had been considering this gesture for a year and was on a hunger strike to regain his complete freedom and obtain a passport which would permit him to go abroad--he had been invited to a symposium on de Gaulle which was to have been held in Amboise (France) on 24 May under the chairmanship of Michel Debre, former French minister. The campaign was unsuccessful, and the foreign personalities requested to intervene limited themselves to an expression of sympathy.

On site, the situation became complicated on 27 May. Three days after the start of his strike, Masmoudi was hospitalized, with the consent of his family at the Pr Bechir Maknini resuscitation service, in Charles-Nicolle Hospital in Tunis. On 31 May, he was in serious condition. He was transferred to the Pr Ben Ayed service (neurology) which placed him in "intensive care." According to family members, Masmoudi (age 55) whose condition was "alarming" was suffering from an "imbalance of metabolism with cardiac and renal complications." In Tunis, the government did not react; however, it is known that it was President Bourguiba himself who did not envision yielding. Public opinion, which had largely forgotten Masmoudi, did not seem greatly moved by this passport affair, even though on principle it felt he had a right to the passport. However, the supporters of liberalization emphasized that this gesture by the former foreign minister was "inopportune": the wrong battle, at the wrong time, on the wrong terrain.

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Against the Current

The main point is to think first about getting people out of prison, not to permit such and such personality to leave the country. At the very moment the new prime minister, Mohamed M'Zali, was asking those in exile to return to the country and spoke of "maintaining contact with all currents of thought," we wonder about the reasons which induced a politician as astute as Mohamed Masmoudi to go against the current.

At the risk of interesting only those in Tunis itself who are opposed to the present current of liberalization...

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WESTERN SAHARA

RECENT MOROCCAN OFFENSIVE SEEN AS DECISIVE IN SAHARA

Paris JEUNE AFRIQUE in French 28 May 80 pp 100-103

[Unsigned article: "The Inevitable Changeover of the Army"]

[Text] There are now and have been up to now a sufficient number of modern guerrilla wars for us to be able to pick out some of their common characteristics. Certain theoreticians (Che Guevara, Mao) have even systematized them in a way that makes it possible for us to understand the reasons for the success of many insurgencies. Keeping these in mind we ought to be able to come up with some ideas about the POLISARIO's military (and political) future.

The common motivation which is the driving force for insurgents can be either the longing for national self-determination, or social revolution, or both at the same time. Resorting to armed struggle is not an end in itself. A guerrilla movement never--or almost never--wins on a military basis. Military attacks--even if they help demoralize the enemy--are a means of attaining extra-military objectives: winning the sympathy of public opinion and of opposition forces in the aggressor nation, and isolating it on the international scene. Finally, from a tactical point of view, guerrillas know that their only chance of survival is to live among the civilian population like "fish in the sea."

The role of the government in power is a more thankless one. It inevitably suffers from unfavorable prejudice. Condemned to being on the defensive, it is subject to the opposite rule from that of the guerrilla: if it does not manage to win, then it loses.

Warfare carried out by the government is based on a misapprehension: it is fighting in the military realm while the enemy is waging war on an overall basis, military and political at the same time.

Kissinger in his time had understood what would make the Americans lose the Vietnam war. In the long run, the motivation of soldiers in a regular army is always lesser than that of guerrillas: generally efforts are made to have them defend a cause that is too abstract (for example, the "free world").

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For many foreign governments--not just progressive ones--and a segment of world public opinion, the western Sahara conflict is a classic case of national liberation warfare. To all appearances it combines all the ingredients: a disputed territory and a population demanding self-determination in armed rebellion against a national government which has a nasty reputation. Rabat claims to be the victim of a political fraud: Morocco effectively managed to get the Spanish to leave the western Sahara only to see the laurels for the liberator go to the Polisario, a creation of the colonial power against which it had fired hardly a handful of rounds.

A Fish in a Fishbowl

The Saharan rebels have a certain number of advantages. Unquestionably the most important one is the capacity of their allies. The Algerians give them the benefit of their long guerrilla experience and of masterful diplomatic skill employed in the service of big and small causes. Algiers supplies the Polisario with organization and for 5 years has provided it with an inviolate sanctuary. Libyans furnish plenty of weapons and money. Finally, Malians, Nigerians and Algerian Tuaregs supply men willy-nilly. The Saharans are at one with the land which holds no secrets for them. They are heirs to a long tradition of patience and frugality which makes particularly tough fighters out of them.

Nonetheless, in our opinion the POLISARIO suffers from disadvantages more decisive than its assets. Its foremost weakness is that in the Sahara it is difficult, not to say impossible, to live except like a fish out of water, in every sense of those words. They are like a fish in a fishbowl. The civilian population backing them could not be greater than 40,000 people. The demographic base is too narrow to insure that guerrillas killed in combat are replaced. The assistance from Mali, Niger and Algeria cannot change the situation in any lasting way. Algerian soldiers would find it very hard to fight in great numbers among the ranks of the POLISARIO. Algerians don't particularly want to mourn useless deaths.

"Be Neither a Sultan Nor His Monkey"

The recruitment of 7,000 Mauriticians is, on the other hand, more of a deciding factor. But it doesn't seem that they are highly motivated. If it weren't for the pool of Mauriticians, the POLISARIO would have long ago reached their maximum of fighting men. Today it numbers 17,000 men under arms. The Moroccans can no longer bank on its troops declining in numbers.

What is worse, the POLISARIO and its "fishbowl" are located outside the territory they claim, in Algeria, or else in undisputed Moroccan territory adjacent to it. Therefore the POLISARIO has a necessity linked its destiny to the vicissitudes of Algerian political life. However, by controlling the Warkziz, the POLISARIO will try and influence the local

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populations in the Wad Draa. Since it is forced to do its fighting--or to set up sanctuaries--far from its bases, it has difficult logistical problems that it must solve. This is undoubtedly why the POLISARIO and Algiers have felt it more to their advantage to entrench themselves in the solidly defended positions of the Hamada of Tindouf. The war is becoming less mobile and increasingly being waged along classical lines.

And finally, as we have said, political motivation in guerrilla warfare is of the highest importance, even to the point of being decisive. Now, the POLISARIO's motives are ambiguous. It dreams of a state which has never existed. The Saharan tribes which have taken up arms, especially the Reguibat, keep alive an age-old spirit of defiance towards any centralized authority, which is expressed rather well by the slogan "be neither a sultan nor his monkey." But there is an enormous gap between regional spirit and a demand for independence.

How was this bridged? The POLISARIO leaders were brought into politics as leftists strongly influenced by "frontist" (Marxist-Leninist) ideas which had briefly flourished in the Moroccan universities. The Sahara, for them, was only the "weakest link" in Morocco's reactionary structure. It took Spain's discovery of all the advantages in creating an independent state, and her recruiting young Saharan students into a Polisario which Algeria was then going to take under its wing, for the revolutionary demands--nurtured by feelings of regional solidarity--to develop into "national" demands. For the SDAR [Saharan Democratic Arab Republic] officials, the hope--is it a mirage?--of a mini-state which would make them phosphate sheiks is definitely the principal motive. The Gulf mini-states are a creation of British imperialism which never ran into an adversary able to checkmate that effort. France on the other hand failed lamentably in its effort to detach the Cabinda oil enclave from the rest of Angola, not to mention what happened in the oil-bearing part of the Sahara.

On the Moroccan side, their tangible military advantages have not become apparent until a few months ago. This does not mean that the FAR (Royal Armed Forces) dominate this war completely. For a regular army, the FAR have an astonishing patriotic motivation. None of the soldiers thinks he is involved in waging an unjust war. But the leadership of the troops is still deficient. On this kind of terrain, the desert makes it possible to round people up into towns that are relatively easy to defend.

But, conversely, it requires that troops be dispersed into many different positions which are vulnerable to attack by groups which outnumber them. The FAR have a complement of around 40,000 men in the Shara. The handicaps that they labor under are now mainly in the past. Their reorganization and reoutfitting started in 1975, after several years of disarray. Which is to say that the FAR have had to become combat-hardened.

The liberal orientation of the Moroccan economy does not allow for a heavy-handed allocation of budgetary resources favoring the army. Some

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of Morocco's initial setback are explained by equipment being in short supply and in a deteriorated condition. The war continues to restrain economic development, which sparks a sizeable amount of social discontent. Broadly speaking, victory should have smiled on Morocco from the start of hostilities. This was however not the case in practice. Moroccan officials had based their strategy on two assumptions which are nowadays rejected as illusions:

1--Algeria will ultimately come to terms; and

2--The POLISARIO is nothing but a band of ragged guerrilla fighters.

It took Rabat 4 years to realize its mistake and make appropriate adjustments. The war took a new turn on Monday, 29 October 1979, with the start of Operation Ohoud. On that day the second phase of the war began. So from 1975 to 1979 the situation had gradually and seriously worsened for Morocco. The POLISARIO graduated from commando warfare by small units to large-scale raids on towns.

From 1975 to 1978 the POLISARIO aimed at three kinds of target: isolated posts, convoys, and security perimeters around towns. Its tactics were: to conduct harassment and then to withdraw. Except for land convoys which were being sent out less and less frequently, the Moroccans figures they could put up with these "pinpricks" without sustaining any real damage.

Submarine Hunt

Certain FAR officers described their strategy by making an analogy between the desert and the ocean. For them it did no good to go out on patrol in the Sahara looking for enemy jeeps for the same reason that it was absurd, during World War II, to hunt down enemy submarines in the vast expanse of ocean. And how do you protect yourself against submarines? By setting a trap for them around their natural targets, port areas. In the same way, the FAR surrounded every settlement in the desert with security perimeters, which everyone in Morocco ~~saw~~ were impenetrable. Those were the good old days of the "100 points" (towns or strategic sites) theory. Holding on to them was holding on to the Sahara. "Why should it bother us that the POLISARIO wanders around in the Sahara? Since they can't get firmly established..," certain officers used to say with a great deal of arrogance, making a show of not knowing that the POLISARIO had bases on the Moroccan side.

How could they not have known that starting in 1977 the POLISARIO had begun to set up a logistical network which was going to allow them, starting out from their bases themselves, in Saguia el-Jamra, Rio de Oro and Warkiz, to organize repeated attacks on Moroccan positions.

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Terrible Dilemma

It became evident that the attackers were not all coming from Tindouf and not all returning there right away. The fact that their sanctuaries were nearby gave them a sense of relative impunity. This war of position was paralyzing the FAR.

Like all soldiers the world over, the ones in the FAR don't care for defensive warfare. Waiting a long long time for an enemy who never shows up makes you less vigilant. That's the time when deficiencies come to the fore and serious mistakes are made which a very watchful POLISARIO will rush in to take advantage of. At Smara, for example, basic aerial observation would have caused the alarm to be sounded before the attack.

In addition to these awkward aspects of a war of position, there was a relative shortage of officers whose numbers did not keep pace with the increase in army troops. Also, paradoxically for this conflict, the regular army was less well equipped than the guerrilla army.

The attack on the city of Tan-Tan in January 1979 put Rabat on notice to change its strategy. But Hassan II seemed hemmed in by a terrible dilemma: adopting the same style of warfare as the POLISARIO, converting his army into fallant and scrappy little units, certainly more effective but also more undisciplined, would at the same time lessen his capability to confront Algeria in a conventional war.

Morocco chose an intermediate solution which for all that seems to justify the POLISARIO's setting themselves up in permanent bases that are known and accounted for and its converting over to a more conventional kind of warfare. So, we have in the Ohoud division a combination of armored, infantry and highly mobile commando units. This combination should give the Ohoud a certain amount of operational flexibility. But certain officers think that the inclusion of S.K. tanks, for example, is in fact a relic of the wrongheaded strategy of the past. Armies, like all bureaucracies, cannot be changed over, even half-way, to fight another kind of war unfamiliar to them, without a lot of difficulty and resistance. Commanded by General Dlimi, the Ohoud unit was followed up by the creation of the Zellaqa in February put under Colonel-Major Abrouk. A third unit should see the light of day in the months to come. These fresh troops have been provided with equipment as good as or better than the POLISARIO's. Since they are highly mobile their mission is to comb the Sahara to rid it of enemy bases. The desert, in the mind of Moroccan strategists, must be turned into a "high-risk zone" for the POLISARIO which must no longer be able to get together large concentrations of troops and vehicles. The ultimate goal--which according to the king should be reached in 1980--is absolute control of the Sahara, with those guerrillas in place on the Moroccan side having been prevented from moving equipment from the Algerian side.

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The balance sheet for the first 5 months of this strategic readjustment is rather inconclusive.

What is the POLISARIO's response? Refusing to confront the Ohoud in the Tiris el-Gharbia, and restricting the number and scope of its attacks in the central and Western Sahara, it has concentrated its best units in undisputed Moroccan territory, the Warkziz region.

At the start of May, the FAR unleashed a vast offensive to retake control of this region. And it really seems that this battle will be decisive.

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WESTERN SAHARA

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POLISARIO ASSETS NOTED--No guerrilla force has ever had assets equal to those of the Polisario Front, according to observers following the operation being carried out by the Moroccan army against the Sahraoui guerrilla fighters. The Polisario Front is capable of immediately replacing the equipment it loses in combat, and its high-ranking officers have acquired great mastery in the conduct of operations. [Text] [Paris JEUNE AFRIQUE in French 4 Jun 80 p 4] 5157

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